

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 03678 232217Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 SAB-02 /069 W
-----240240Z 012689 /66

R 232134Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2028
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMCONSUL BELIZE
USCINCSO
PANCANAL

UNCLAS PANAMA 3678

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS:PFOR, PN, GT, BY
SUBJECT: CONTINUED REACTION TO DIPLOMATIC BREAK WITH GUATEMALA;
BELIZEAN PM PRICE CONCLUDES UNOFFICIAL VISIT

REF: PANAMA 3645

1. OFFICIAL PANAMIAN REACTION TO GUATEMALAN RHETORIC
ACCOMPANYING THE SEVERING OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
SURFACED MAY 22. IN A PUBLIC STATEMENT FOREIGN MINISTER
GONZALEZ-REVILLA PROTESTED THE "INSULTS THAT HAVE BEEN
DIRECTED AT OUR CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT AND THE PANAMANIAN
PEOPLE BY THE HIGHEST GUATEMALAN OFFICIALS". GONZALEZ-
REVILLA AVERRED THAT THE GOP HAD AVOIDED INFLAMMATORY
STATEMENTS ON THE GUATEMALAN ACTION TO AVOID EXACERBATING
THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, BUT THAT
STATEMENTS BRANDING GENERAL TORRIJOS AS "A SOLDIER WITHOUT
HONOR", "IMITATOR OF IDI AMIN" AND "TRAITOR" TESTED THE
LIMITS OF PANAMA'S PATIENCE. HE CONCLUDED WITH A
CALL FOR ALL AMERICAN COUNTRIES "TO REFLECT SERENLY,
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DISPASSIONATELY AND RESPECTFULLY ON THE PROBLEM OF
BELIZE (SINCE) THESE GOVERNMENTS WILL CARRY THE
FUTURE OF THE BELIZEANS ON THEIR CONSCIENCE".

2. EDITORIAL COMMENT HAS REFLECTED TONE OF OFFICIAL
GOP COMMUNIQUE (REFTEL), SUPPORTING BELIZE'S RIGHT TO
SELF-DETERMINATION AND CHARACTERIZING GUATEMALA'S

POSITION AS INCREASINGLY UNPOPULAR IN LATIN AMERICA,
AND THE THIRD WORLD.

3. PRIME MINISTER PRICE DEPARTED PANAMA FOR CARACAS
MAY 22 AFTER A TWO-DAY UNOFFICIAL VISIT. PRICE
MET WITH TORRIJOS ON TWO OCCASIONS TO DISCUSS BELIZE.
DETAILS OF THE TALKS HAVE NOT BEEN PUBLISHED. IN SEVERAL
INTERVIEWS, PRICE REITERATED HIS APPRECIATION FOR PANAMA'S
SUPPORT. HE ALSO DISCUSSED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A
UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE TO GUARANTEE BELIZEAN INDEPENDENCE.
PRICE SEES THE U.S., MEXICO AND PANAMA AS POSSIBLE
PARTICIPANTS IN THE FORCE.

4. EMBASSY HAS CONFIRMATION FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT
COSTA RICA WILL REPRESENT PANAMANIAN INTERESTS IN
GUATEMALA UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL
REACTION TO AN AP REPORT FROM MEXICO CITY THAT MEXICO
IS "STUDYING THE POSSIBILITY OF MEDIATING THE
DISPUTE BETWEEN PANAMA AND GUATEMALA".

GONZALEZ

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
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